DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 085 647 CG 008 590

TITLE Action for Foster Children: Community Self Evaluation Chart.
INSTITUTION Office of Child Development (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 73
NOTE 28p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Child Welfare; *Civil Rights; *Community Responsibility; *Community Services; *Foster Children; Government Publications; Human Dignity; Program Evaluation; Social Problems

ABSTRACT

This chart is a tool with which communities can rate themselves on the care of foster children. It is based on a ten-article Bill of Rights for foster children. The ten articles are: (1) the right to be cherished by a family; (2) the right to be nurtured by foster parents who have been specially selected; (3) the right to receive help in understanding and accepting the reasons for his own family's inability to take care of him; (4) the right to receive loving care and respect; (5) the right to grow up in a neighborhood of people who understand and accept him; (6) the right to receive help in overcoming deprivation in his emotional, physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual growth that may have resulted from his early experiences; (7) the right to receive education and career guidance; (8) the right to receive preparation for citizenship and parenthood; (9) the right to be represented by an attorney with access to fair hearings and court review of decisions; and (10) the right to receive a high quality of child welfare services. Each article is followed by specific suggestions for implementation. (Author)

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ACTION FOR FOSTER CHILDREN

COMMUNITY SELF EVALUATION CHART

based on

THE BILL OF RIGHTS FOR FOSTER CHILDREN

U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Office of Human Development/Office of Child Development
Children's Bureau

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ACTION FOR FOSTER CHILDREN

COMMUNITY SELF EVALUATION CHART

DO FOSTER FAMILY SERVICES IN YOUR COMMUNITY MEASURE UP TO THE BILL OF RIGHTS FOR FOSTER CHILDREN?

	Good	Fair	Inadequate
Article the first - Every foster child has the inherent right to be cherished by a family of his own, either his family helped by readily available services and supports to reassume his care, or an adoptive family or by plan, a continuing foster family.	☐	☐	☐

What services does your community provide to avoid unnecessary separation of children from their natural families?

Does your community provide 24-hour emergency services for children in crisis?

What percentage of children are returned within reasonable time limits to improved family situations?

What percentage of children are placed for adoption? How long are they in care before they are adopted?

Article the first (continued)

What percentage of children with special problems are placed in adoptive homes, either according to the usual plan or through the subsidized adoption plan?

What percentage of children are in permanent foster family care with signed agreements?

What is the average length of placement of foster children according to purpose of placement, i.e., emergency placement, return to natural family, placement for adoption, permanent foster family?

	Good	Fair	Inadequate
Article the second - Every foster child has the inherent right to be nurtured by foster parents who have been selected to meet his individual needs and who are provided services and supports, including specialized education, so that they can grow in their ability to enable the child to reach his potential.	▱	▱	▱

Are there sufficient numbers of foster homes to allow for matching the qualities of each foster home to the child's special needs and developmental difficulties, such as adolescent, behavioral, emotional and retardation problems?

Is there a year-round challenging recruitment program?

What is the foster care maintenance rate in your community? Does this cover the total cost of raising a foster child?

Do foster parents receive a salary with fringe benefits?

Are foster parents given pre-service and on-going education for fostering? Who provides it? What does it include?

	Good	Fair	Inadequate
Article the third - Every foster child has the inherent right to receive sensitive, continuing help in understanding and accepting the reasons for his own family's inability to take care of him, and in developing confidence in his own self-worth.	▱	▱	▱

Where parental rights have not been terminated, how is the natural family involved in all major decisions affecting the child?

How do agency staff, including foster parents respond to visiting by parents and significant family members?

What percent of natural family members visit regularly?

Are discussions held routinely with the foster family regarding the natural family and the reasons that made placement necessary?

Are discussions held with the child regarding the natural family and the reasons that made placement necessary?

Does agency staff including foster parents utilize various ways of helping the foster child develop confidence in his own self-worth?

	Good	Fair	Inadequate
Article the fourth - Every foster child has the inherent right to receive continuing loving care and respect as a unique human being -- a child growing in trust in himself and others.	☐	☐	☐

Are foster families selected for parental abilities and qualities of warmth, acceptance of differences, and concern for foster children and their natural families?

Is there mutual trust between foster parents and social workers?

How often are children moved from foster home to foster home?

Are social workers changed at a rate that is harmful to the child?

What is the retention rate of foster families?

Do foster parents and social workers identify the foster child's talents, special abilities, and personal goals and secure special resources to develop them?

Good	Fair	Inadequate
☐	☐	☐

Article the fifth - Every foster child has the inherent right to grow up in freedom and dignity in a neighborhood of people who accept him with understanding, respect and friendship.

Is there a community program to provide information for citizens about the needs of foster children? Who runs it?

Are there organized opportunities for citizens to express responsibility and commit themselves to become advocates for improved foster family services?

Are there programs which provide opportunities for citizens to be trained for and to work as volunteers with foster children and natural parents?

Do foster children have the same standing as other children in schools, recreation and neighborhood activities?

	Good	Fair	Inadequate
Article the sixth - Every foster child has the inherent right to receive help in overcoming deprivation or whatever distortion in his emotional, physical, intellectual, social and spiritual growth may have resulted from his early experiences.	☐	☐	☐

Is social work staff qualified and experienced and effective in producing improvements in the above areas?

Is there provision for professional consultation (psychiatric, educational, psychological, etc.), as needed?

Are the preventive health, medical, dental and optical needs of foster children being met? Are adequate financial resources available to meet these needs?

Does the agency have working agreements with other community groups to secure needed services?

What are the resources and services needed for foster children which are not available in your community? (list)

	Good	Fair	Inadequate
Article the seventh - Every foster child has the inherent right to receive education, training, and career guidance to prepare him for a useful and satisfying life.	☐	☐	☐

Are there efforts to help school personnel understand the special stresses on foster children and to provide resources to help the child achieve?

Is there a planned program of determining education levels and for securing tutoring, if needed?

Is there a regular program of career counseling and guidance for foster children?

How many scholarships for college, vocational training, etc., were provided foster children last year?

Are community resources available for educating foster children with special handicaps such as mental retardation, blindness, etc.?

	Good	Fair	Inadequate
	☐	☐	☐

Article the eighth - Every foster child has the inherent right to receive preparation for citizenship and parenthood through interaction with foster parents and other adults who are consistent role models.

Are special efforts made to help each child remain with the same foster parents as long as helpful, to enable the child to adopt values and useful patterns?

Does interaction between foster child, foster mother and father provide the child with consistent role models of good citizenship and parenthood?

Are other adult models available to the child?

Is the social work relationship helpful to the foster child?

Are foster children appropriately involved in group activities?

	Good	Fair	Inadequate
Article the ninth - Every foster child has the inherent right to be represented by an attorney at law in administrative or judicial proceedings with access to fair hearings and court review of decisions, so that his best interests are safeguarded.	☐	☐	☐

Does the agency policy recognize and describe the legal status and rights of natural parents and the foster child?

Does the agency describe fair hearings and grievance procedures for natural parents and the foster child, and are these procedures regularly interpreted to parents and the foster child?

Is legal representation available to natural parents and foster child especially for those who cannot afford it?

Is there provision for appropriate court review of agency decisions?

	Good	Fair	Inadequate
Article the tenth - Every foster child has the inherent right to receive a high quality of child welfare services, including involvement of the natural parents and his own involvement in major decisions that effect his life.	▱	▱	▱

Is funding sufficient to provide a good quality of foster family services?

Are there adequate employment procedures for prospective foster parents?

Are there licensing requirements for foster families which safeguard the child's well being?

Are the number of foster children and their current problems limited to those each foster family can manage?

Is there a diagnostic conference and plan developed for each child by social service and foster parent staff?

Are foster parents involved individually and in conferences in the development of plans during placement and for termination of placement by return home, adoption, etc.?

Are foster parents given adequate agency help and support in carrying out their special roles in achieving goals determined in the social service diagnostic conference?

Article the tenth (continued)

Does the supervising social worker develop a team relationship with foster parents in carrying out their respective roles?

Is there an immediate study involving natural parents and children when appropriate, for developing tentative diagnostic goals and time-limited steps to reach goals?

Does the social worker begin immediately to help the natural parents improve their situation?

Is the group method also used to improve the relationship between the natural parents and foster child?

What percent of natural parents whose rights have not been terminated were in conference with the social worker last month?

Is there an immediate development of a working relationship with the child?

Were diagnostic goals and intermediate time-limited steps established and carried out?

Is there a routine review of success in meeting goals?

Article the tenth (continued)

Are work-loads established according to the type of child and family problems and limited to a size (from 30-35 children for usual case situations) to enable workers to provide good services?

What percentage of natural families and foster children do not have a worker assigned?

Is there orientation and on-going education for all staff?

Are there provisions for fair hearings and grievance procedures which are routinely interpreted for staff including foster parents?

Are there adequate procedures for semi-annual or annual evaluations?

Are supervisors professionally qualified, experienced, and expected to supervise no more than six workers?

Are direct service workers selected for knowledge useful in helping people, personal qualifications, and interest in helping natural parents and foster children?

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1979—[illegible]